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ABSTRACT

This report discusses theories about and studies on the relationship between school districts and community power structures. It offers practical techniques for decisionmakers to use in dealing with such power structures. Various participants and influentials in the community power structure are identified and discussed. Two major power typologies are presented: (1) the sociology-based or reputational, which is representative of those who view a community power structure as pyramidal in shape with only a few elite at the top; and (2) the issue analysis, which is often representative of the view of political scientists, who argue that power and influence patterns often change from issue to issue since people are more inclined to become involved in issues that interest them individually. The author suggests that while most studies support the reputational point of view, educational administrators, by assigning greater emphasis to issue analysis, would fare better in dealing with power structures. (JF)

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COMMUNITY POWER STUDY APPLICATIONS TO EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

October, 1971

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Introduction

The school district is the most numerous of the nation's local governmental units. It indeed is a political and legal entity, a civil sub-division of the state, a quasi-municipal corporation, and has been provided with considerable operating autonomy.

As we pass literally from "the Age of Aquarius" to what might be termed "the Age of Accountability" we note a growing concern with and interest in the at least semi-autonomous school district at the local level. In fact, as far back as 1959 Eliot noted the mounting concern over the aims and achievements of American public schools and emphasized "the need for continuing analysis of how the schools are run and who runs them."[1] Local school systems, then, have been discovered by social and political scientists, scholars of other disciplines, and many members of the schools' various relevant publics. However, this discovery has been evolutionary rather than revolutionary in development and has represented only limited application of studies of total communities and their power structures and influence patterns.

Cunningham clearly expressed this point of view when he observed that there have been relatively few attempts to study decisions within what he called "the educational territorial system."

According to Cunningham, most power and decision studies have been conducted within broader and overlapping "territorial systems" and have lacked direct focus on educational decision-making processes. Consequently,

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[1]Thomas H. Eliot, "Toward an Understanding of Public School Politics," American Political Science Review, Vol. 52 (December, 1959), p. 1032.

the result has been that most references to educational decisions have been "tangential or peripheral."[2]

The growing recognition that schools are an integral part of the total society brings with it the necessity for understanding educational decision-making processes and their relationships to the total political and societal realities of the community in which the schools are to function. There have been analyses of these processes and relationships, but, as suggested earlier, they have been limited, tangential, and peripheral.

Some analysts have studied the school district specifically with reference to community power and influence. This treatise will consider some of these applications to educational administration and "the politics of education" in an emergent "Age of Accountability."

First, however, it is necessary to look very briefly at the general studies of community which have set the stage for the rather limited applications to education.

Analyses of Community Power Structures

It is beyond the scope of this treatment to attempt to discuss in detail the vast amount of research on community power structure and influence patterns. Instead, the references will be brief, and it is suggested that the reader refer to an earlier review for a detailed discussion.[3]

For in-depth analyses of various positions, methodologies, findings, conclusions and implications the reader's attention also is called to the

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[2]Luvern L. Cunningham, Governing Schools: New Approaches to Old Issues, Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1971, pp. 115-116.

[3]John A. Spiess, Community Power and Influence Studies: Two Positions, Toledo, Ohio: The University of Toledo, 1970.

excellent works of Peter Rossi, Sethard Fisher, Thomas Anton, and Nelson Polsby.[4]

Community analysis research has yielded two rather dichotomous views of power configurations at the local community level. The two resultant philosophies are known as "reputational" and "pluralistic" and have their roots in the work of Floyd Hunter, a sociologist, and Robert Dahl, a political scientist.

Simply stated, Dahl's pluralistic orientation developed from critiques of Hunter's reputational methodology while Hunter's approach derived from the methods of stratificationists such as Robert and Helen Merrill Lynd, W. Lloyd Warner, Robert Havighurst, and August Hollingshead. These stratification analysts centered their efforts on social strata or level and its effects on man's social and environmental relationships.

Working primarily in the 1920's, 30's, and 40's the stratificationists interviewed all available adults in a community and seemed to agree that an upper class power elite rules, and there is much class solidarity.[5]

A preponderance of community studies prior to 1950 utilized stratification methodology. These approaches marked the beginning of real emphasis on the study of community in the United States.

Floyd Hunter has dominated the contemporary scene just as the stratificationists were so important to the earlier era. His approach evolved directly from the earlier methodology in that he modified stratification study procedures

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[4]See: Peter H. Rossi, "Community Decision Making," Administrative Science Quarterly, Vol. 1 (March, 1957), pp. 415-443; Sethard Fisher, "Community Power Studies: A Critique," Social Research, Vol. 29 (Winter, 1962), pp. 449-466; Thomas J. Anton, "Power, Pluralism, and Local Politics," Administrative Science Quarterly, Vol. 7 (March, 1963), pp. 425-457; and Nelson W. Polsby, Community Power and Political Theory, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963.

[5]For detailed review of the work of the stratificationists, see: Spiess, op. cit., pp. 2-7.

by using a sampling technique. Hunter's report of his study of Atlanta, Georgia was extremely well-received, and the methodology described has been widely imitated.[6]

The Hunter research method, known as the reputational approach, was based on contacts with persons in positions of influence who were reputed to be leaders. These individuals were asked to serve on an "expert panel" for the purpose of nominating those considered influential in the community. Forty reputed influentials were selected by this means, and lengthy interviews were conducted.

Based on interview findings, personal observations, and news accounts of the reputationally-identified influentials, it was concluded that a small group of men made up a power elite which ran the affairs of Atlanta. This, then, is the power configuration, the monolithic power pyramid, and the elitist view of community power and influence.

Extensive use, imitation, and in-depth analysis of the reputational approach to community study resulted in detailed discussion, criticism, and even some refutation of the methodology. Principal criticism came from political scientists and gave birth to a power research philosophy which has come to be known as "the pluralistic school of thought."

Robert Dahl's research in New Haven, Connecticut has become the best known application of the pluralistic philosophy in which society is viewed as an aggregate of self-interest motivated individuals rather than an elitist pyramid.[7]

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[6]See: Floyd Hunter, Community Power Structure, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1953.

[7]See: Robert A. Dahl, Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961.

Dahl and his colleagues utilized the technique of issue analysis. Event participants in each of three issue areas were identified by studying newspapers and public documents, and lengthy interviews and reinterviews were held with the participants.

The New Haven researchers concluded that the city's "Social and Economic Notables" did not constitute a ruling elite. It was conceded, though, that these "Notables" could be influential on specific decisions, particularly when such decisions directly involved business prosperity.

Indications were that influence in New Haven was specialized. Stated differently, those individuals influential in one sector of public activity tended not to be influential in another area. It is this finding that is in direct opposition to Hunter's monolithic power pyramid concept.

Reputational and pluralistic methods of community analysis do differ significantly, and findings, conclusions, and philosophies frequently are at variance. Reputationalists are likely to find an economic dominated power elite with a select few running the community's affairs. The pluralists, on the other hand, believe that influence is somewhat specialized. Consequently, according to the pluralistic point of view, no single group dominates the community.

Yet, both schools of thought do agree on the fundamental point that very few citizens actually participate in the community's decision-making processes.

Limited Applications to Education

Applications of power structure theory and research methodology to the field of education have been somewhat limited. There are several examples, however, with stratification studies being most prominent in earlier years and reputational and pluralistic philosophies coming into the picture somewhat later.

Although it sometimes has been maligned, the reputational methodology has provided the major means for modern power and influence analysis as related to

school situations. Of late, though, growing recognition of the increasingly pluralistic nature of our society seems to be visible in the type of analyses being applied to school situations.

Boards of Education

As noted, in the 1920's and 1930's stratification study was the most common method of community analysis. As is to be expected, then, the methodology of the stratification analyst was employed in the early studies of community power and influence effects on the public schools. The focus for study usually was the board of education, and findings and conclusions frequently reflected the social-analytical thinking of the times.

In 1927, George Counts published the results of his studies of the composition of school boards. His conclusions were significant, because many studies since that time have provided empirical support for the basic proposition first advanced by Counts.

The Counts' report asserted that control of schools rests in the hands of people drawn from the more favored economic and social classes. The author insisted that this fact inevitably shapes the nature of the educative process and that schools naturally reflect the values of the dominant class.[8]

The well-known "Elmtown" Study was a prime example of stratification methodology with findings that supported Counts' earlier observations. Hollingshead's research endeavors centered at Elmtown High School where he analyzed the effect of social stratification upon students. The major conclusion was that his family's social status had much to do with a pupil's school attendance record, athletic participation, grades and the manner in which the student was disciplined.

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[8]George Counts, The Social Composition of Boards of Education, Supplementary Monographs No. 23, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927.

In line with earlier observations from Counts' study, research in Elmtown suggested that a small number of upper class families controlled the majority of decisions relating to schools, welfare programs, and public expenditures. Hollingshead noted that in theory any adult citizen of the district could be elected to the school board. In practice, however, members always came from the two upper classes, were very conservative in efforts to hold down costs, and had to qualify under informal "ground rules."

According to Hollingshead, an Elmtown board member had to be male, protestant, Republican, a property owner, and preferably a Rotarian. The Rotarians as a group seemed to find the question of school cost very important and expressed pride in the way they had controlled the selection of board of education members for over twenty-five years.[9]

A University of Oregon study team later reported similar conclusions: "Leadership. . . will not be a cross section of the population but will tend to represent certain occupations, income, educational levels, and certain organizations."[10]

Gross was another writer who noted the high social class composition of the school board. He suggested that this upper class bias would influence decision-making in the school system.[11]

This charge was at least partially substantiated in a Utah study designed to locate the center of influence on the board of education. It was found

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[9]August B. Hollingshead, Elmtown's Youth, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1949, p. 86.

[10]American Association of School Administrators, Educational Administration in a Changing World, 37th Yearbook, Washington, D. C.: The Association, 1959, p. 68.

[11]Neal Gross, "A Critique of Social Class Structure and American Education," Harvard Educational Review (Fall, 1953), p. 324.

that board members varied in power according to the population of their specific district, status and prestige in the community, and religious denomination.[12]

Charters reported that in sixty-two school districts across the nation over three-fourths of the school boards were composed of business and professional people. The members were representative of approximately 15 per cent of the population of the various communities.[13]

As indicated, Counts' contention that upper classes dominated boards of education received support from many other sources. Rebuttals to charges of biased decision-making have been offered, however.

Charters, who reported board membership dominance by business and professional groups, questioned whether attitudes members might hold as community citizens would enter into decisions reached as officers of school boards.[14]

One researcher examined votes cast by board officers in twelve western cities. Social positions of these officers were determined from occupation and income. No clear relationship was found between the stands taken by the officers on school legislation of social import and their social positions in the community. The researcher suggested the possibility that an individual who becomes a school board official will speak, vote, and even think differently from the way he did as a community citizen.[15]

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[12]William G. Dyer, "Sources of Power in a Utah School District," Adult Education, Vol. 10, No. 2 (Winter, 1960), pp. 109-112.

[13]W. W. Charters, Jr., "Social Class Analysis and the Control of Public Education," Harvard Educational Review (Fall, 1963), p. 270.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Roald F. Campbell, "The Social Implications of School Board Legislation," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Stanford University, Palo Alto, 1942.

From a sample of 414 school board members in Illinois, Caughran concluded that business and professional persons predominated and that their incomes were above average. His major finding, though, was that no significant correlations existed between backgrounds, showing strong upper status biases, and attitudes on important educational issues.[16]

Thus, at least a few critics questioned Counts' basic proposition that the values of the dominant class enter into the decision-making activities in which board members engage.

Political Aspects of Schools

As suggested in the introduction, writers, particularly of late, have emphasized the importance of community power and influence considerations in the operation and administration of schools. Along this line, the American school administrator's vulnerability to external pressure on issues of major concern to laymen has been emphasized in the literature.[17]

Writers such as Campbell, et. al., have agreed that educational policy making at all levels is immersed in politics and that by definition educational policy making is political action. These same authors have observed that "The limited power structure investigations focusing directly on school issues have

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[16]Roy W. Caughran, "The School Board Member Today," American School Board Journal (December, 1956), pp. 25-26.

[17]See particularly: Burton R. Clark, "The Sociology of Educational Administration," in Roland J. Pellegrin (ed.), Perspectives on Educational Administration and the Behavioral Sciences, Eugene, Oregon: The Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration, University of Oregon, 1965, p. 60.

documented the political nature of school decision making as well as the interrelatedness of educational issues and other community matters."[18]

The many aspects of education that are the legitimate concern of political scientists have been pointed out by Eliot, as previously noted.[19] Masters, in turn, said that "No matter how exercised school authorities may become over the charge, education is very much a part of politics."[20] He continued by stressing that even though educators abhor the idea that favoritism or corruption ever could be involved in any of their policies, deliberations or activities, political pressures do exist. Because decisions are not made in a public interest vacuum many interests are involved, according to this point of view.[21]

Other writers have approached the political aspects of education in different ways. For example, one study considered the instigation of change in the community setting and noted that successful community social action efforts depend on the appropriate involvement of key leaders in the community. The report stipulated that change agents must be aware that certain community members play more important roles than others in the process of decision formulation.

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[18]Roald F. Campbell, Luvern Cunningham, Roderick McPhee, Raphael Nystrand, The Organization and Control of American Schools, Second Edition, Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1970, p. 440.

[19]Eliot, loc. cit.

[20]Nicholas A. Masters, "The Politics of Public Education," in Pellegrin (ed.), op. cit., p. 120.

[21]Ibid., p. 115.

From a review of power structure studies the writers then proposed the following typical characteristics to be used for the identification of so-called "power actors":

1. Persons 50 years old or over
2. In the highest income group in the community
3. In a position of having control of, or access to, the resources of credit, money, jobs, and mass media by virtue of position in credit institutions, firms employing several people, mass media and/or elective offices
4. Above average in education for their age peers
5. In occupations described as self-employed, owener or executive
6. Long time residents of the community.[22]

Masters, expressing a stratificationist philosophy, took a dim view of the perpetuation of class self-interest through the control of public education. He insisted that "patterns of power" frequently are able to restrict educational program content while perpetuating the myth that education is non-political. As hypothesized by Masters, "This means that the myth itself is politically functional."[23]

At least one graduate student attempted to discover how community groups influence school board members. Twelve key issues often considered by boards of education were selected, questionnaires were completed by 232 board members, and newspaper reports of community pressures over a three and one-half year period were studied. Implications were that school boards cannot really

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[22]Subcommittee on Leadership of the North Central Rural Sociology Committee, Identifying the Community Power Structure, North Central Regional Extension Publication, No. 19, Leadership Series No. 2, Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Cooperative Extension Services, November, 1965, pp. 5-8.

[23]Masters, in Pellegrin (ed.), op. cit., p. 113.

reflect the thinking of a majority of citizens of a school district because policy decisions frequently are determined by the political necessity of appeasing articulate minority groups.

In the Long Island school districts studied it was found that pressure was exerted by community groups on all twelve issues. Ten issues were chronic causes of pressure in all districts with the issues of use of school facilities and annual school budgets causing significantly greater pressure in rapid growth districts.

No issue caused significantly more pressure in non-rapid growth areas. Interestingly, considerable relationship was noted between organized group opposition to a board's final decision and the occurence of more negative outcomes and fewer neutral outcomes for all twelve educational issues. This relationship was more pronounced in rapid growth districts.[24]

Mattlin's findings in the study just cited were in accord with observations of many others in the field. Various writers, in fact, have strongly suggested that much of the influence in school decisions comes from interested groups which are a minor segment of the population. Knill, for example, charged that various studies have shown that "there is a lack of wide-spread participation by community citizens and that the school board is representative of community opinion only officially and not in actuality."[25]

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[24]Howard B. Mattlin, "Community Pressures on School Board Members in Nassau and Suffolk Counties, New York," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, New York University, New York, 1960.

[25]William D. Knill, "Community Decision Processes: Research Strategies," in Robert S. Cahill and Stephen P. Hencley (eds.), The Politics of Education in the Local Community, Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1964, p. 85.

District Reorganizations, Referendums, and Decision-Making

In the relatively few applications of community power structure and influence study methodology to educational administration three types of school problems have received most attention. Studies have focused upon issues related to (1) reorganization or consolidation of school districts, (2) school referendums, and (3) general decision-making on the part of boards of education and/or administrators. Much of this research has been in the form of doctoral studies.

The rural communities of "Elm Hollow" and "Green View" were the setting, in 1934, for an early analysis of power and influence within the framework of educational administration.

Using school consolidation issues as the area of study, considerable apathy was discovered in the two communities. Due to the apathy of most citizens, a township supervisor seemed to hold the bulk of power. The researchers reported that this individual, who represented an apparent monolithic power structure, was able to promise additional business and jobs to the four key opponents of consolidation in Elm Hollow. This resulted in a school merger and a new school building in Green View.[26]

Power and influence patterns related to school bond elections have been subjected to some study and analysis. One significant finding is that voter turnout is strongly related to the outcome of the referendum. This conclusion

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[26]Richard L. Schank, "Test Tube for Public Opinion: The Local Community," in Daniel Katz, et. al., (eds.), Public Opinion and Propaganda, New York: Dryden Press, 1954, pp. 598-601.

came from a study employing a sample of 1,054 school districts. The mean total vote at elections that failed was considerably higher than the mean vote on successful issues.[27]

Two school districts in New York State were studied intensively in an effort to ascertain why bond issues repeatedly failed. After extensive interviews it was determined that no real power figures or organized special interest groups had fought the issues. Apparently, the negative votes were associated with expressions of protest over past issues. Discontent seemed greatest where previous inequality of class representation was most noticeable.[28]

These observations are in substantial agreement with Coleman who maintained that the way one particular issue is resolved could have long term effects on local democratic processes.[29]

Another researcher selected two Texas School Districts in which bond issues had passed and two similar districts in which issues had failed. He used a panel approach for the nomination of influentials in each issue and then interviewed the reputationally-selected influentials. No significant relationship was found between attitude and support of community influentials and success of school bond elections.[30]

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[27]William G. Savard, "Voter Turnout in School Financial Elections," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Stanford University, Palo Alto, 1960.

[28]John E. Horton and Wayne Thompson, "Powerlessness and Political Negativism: A Study of Defeated Local Referendums," American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 67, No. 5 (March, 1962), pp. 485-493.

[29]James Coleman, Community Conflict, Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1957, p. 26.

[30]Joe W. Harper, "A Study of Community Power Structure in Certain School Districts in the State of Texas and Its Influence on Bond Elections," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, North Texas State University, Denton, 1965.

Blome studied the community power structure as it related to district reorganization and school bond issues in two selected Iowa school districts. One district was classified as urban and the other was considered rural. The researcher combined the use of a reputational-panel with positional considerations and the study of controversial issues.

Blome felt the use of a panel composed of "positional and occupational knowledgeables" was of considerable value in the identification of community influentials as they related to school issues. He emphasized the need for school administrators to be aware of and to locate persons who were influential on past school and community issues. Blome's contention was that persons influential on past issues could be expected to maintain a position of influence with new issues.

The same researcher listed what he viewed as the principal acts of power exhibited by the key influentials in his study. These included (1) assumed committee chairmanships and other leadership roles, (2) secured key people to give public endorsements, (3) linked two or more organizations, or created a new special interest group to promote issues, (4) used official power, or solicited someone else to use official power, (5) secured favorable news media release, and (6) secured active support of formal community organizations.

Blome suggested that awareness of these various power acts could serve as an additional administrative aid in locating responsible individuals to assist in the successful resolution of school issues.[31]

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[31]Arvin C. Blome, "A Study in the Identification of Community Power Structure and Influence on Public School Issues," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, 1963.

Focus on Decision-Making

Decision-making at the community level has been the subject of considerable investigation, and some of these efforts have centered on the school district.

Goldhammer suggested that to understand some of the problems of local educational decision-making the interactions of four groups must be analyzed. These groups are (1) the non-school citizens of the community, (2) the citizens who hold official positions in the school organization, (3) school administrators, and (4) school teachers.[32]

In words of warning to eager consumers of power research literature, Campbell, Cunningham, McPhee and Nystrand charged that students of community power structure have not differentiated the formal organizational structure in which school decisions are made from those in which other public questions are decided. According to these authors, fluoridation of the water supply, building a new airport, or changing to a city-manager form of government serve as examples of "other public issues."[33]

These comments are reminiscent of those quoted earlier from Luvern Cunningham who indicated that "Most power structure studies. . . are conducted within broader and overlapping territorial systems, and the direct focus on educational decision-making is missing."[34]

Using the type of approach about which Campbell, Cunningham and associates remarked, two researchers dealt with school politics as part of an extensive

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[32]Keith Goldhammer, "Factors Related to Citizen, Administrator, and Teacher Participation in Educational Decision-Making," paper presented to a symposium of the American Educational Research Association, New York, N. Y., February, 1965.

[33]Campbell, Cunningham, McPhee, Nystrand, op. cit., pp. 424-425.

[34]Cunningham, Governing Schools: New Approaches to Old Issues, loc. cit.

analysis of one small community called "Springdale." The school board and the district's chief school administrator were the center of attention in the school portion of the study.

The board of education was identified as the center of the community's most important and far-reaching decisions. Recognition was given to the fact that the school had the largest budget in the community and legitimately could be considered the community's largest industry.

These researchers were strong proponents of issue-decision analysis in the study of community power and influence. They believed that their focus on decision-making in "Springdale" allowed for sharpness of description and clarity of presentation in "the real world" of the decision maker. Vidich and Bensman, the Springdale researchers, did highlight the visibility of school board and administrator activity and the composition of the board, which reflected rural dominance over village interests.[35]

Again from Campbell, et. al., the major contribution of the "Springdale" study "was the demonstration of how community coordination was achieved through leadership."[36] The point is that the overlapping duplication and interlocking of leadership roles in "Springdale" tended to channel community policy making into relatively few hands. This provided a high degree of cohesiveness and community organization.

Issues specifically related to education were analyzed by means of questionnaires and interviews in a doctoral study of five Kentucky school districts with varying degrees of urbanization. Leaders in each community were identified

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[35]Arthur J. Vidich and Joseph Bensman, Small Town in Mass Society, Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday and Company, 1958.

[36]Campbell, Cunningham, McPhee, Nystrand, op. cit., p. 424.

reputationally and interviewed about activity in each of several issue areas. The primary conclusion was that the communities differed in decision-making patterns as they differed in degrees of isolation. In all five communities, though, a few key persons seemed to make the final decisions. It should be mentioned, too, that the more rural communities definitely were the more change resistant and tradition bound.[37]

One researcher attempted to answer three questions related to patterns in board of education decision-making:

1. Is there a pattern by which the school board arrives at a decision?

2. Does the pattern vary with the type of problem?

3. How do the patterns used relate to the findings of previous studies of school board decision-making?

This study was not power structure research, as such. It is described here because it illustrates an approach with a sharp focus on decision-making. Even though outside influences were not considered it is possible to envision an extension of this method with implications for community power and influence analysis.

The researcher observed and recorded behavior of a subject school board for a one year period. He noted various types of board decision-making patterns such as responses to recommendations made by the superintendent of schools. Included were rejecting, accepting without question, tabling, and dropping without decision or formal action.

It was found that a definite pattern existed in that 86 per cent of the time the superintendent's recommendation was accepted on agenda items. A Chi Square test showed variation in a primary problem was clearly related to the

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[37]James B. Graham, "Factors Involved in the Decision-Making Process on Local Issues in Five Selected Communities in Kentucky with Implications for Educational Administration," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Kentucky, Lexington, 1956.

type of problem being considered. For example, on points requiring decisions about buildings and properties the superintendent's recommendations usually were not accepted without question. On personnel matters employment recommendations were accepted without question, but the superintendent was questioned at length about resignations and dismissals.

Curriculum matters normally were subject to considerable questioning and extensive debate. It was observed, too, that the pattern employed on financial decisions varied from patterns reported in other studies. An additional conclusion was that little relationship was apparent between this board's patterns and those of another board in another study. Consequently, generalization from the subject board to the conduct of other boards was deemed unwise.[38]

Keen also searched for relationships in board decisions by means of analysis of decisions made in formal board of education sessions. He randomly selected thirty-four boards from Illinois unit districts in four size categories. Outside influences, as such, were not included in the analysis, but the types of items considered are indicative of a board's concerns and could provide clues as to the areas in which influence patterns might be discovered.

According to Keen, only 2 per cent of the board's decisions were related to instructional programs. Sixty-two per cent were adjudicative in nature, 2 per cent established policy, 8 per cent were ministerial, and 27 per cent fell into the miscellaneous category.[39]

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[38]Donald P. Schock, "Patterns in the Decision-Making Process of a School Baord," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Stanford University, Palo Alto, 1960.

[39]Edward W. Keen, "Some Relationships in the Composition of School Board Decisions," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Illinois, Urbana, 1963.

As previously expressed, many writers have stressed class dominance of the board of education and have interpreted board actions as the perpetuation of power groups.

Holden supported this point of view while emphasizing that the school board naturally is expected to play an important role in school issue decision-making processes. He concluded, however, that board members tend to be selected and supported by local power cliques. Therefore, as seen by Holden, these board members probably were advised by only a few influentials who were relatively unknown as active leaders.[40]

One aspect of the influence of criticism also has been analyzed. The stated purpose of the study was to investigate the attitudes held by board of education members and educators concerning critics and criticisms of education.

Attitude inventories were administered to six administrators, six teachers, and six board members in each of twenty-three randomly selected cities and towns in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska. The major finding was that board members were most receptive in that they accepted criticisms much more readily than did educators, particularly administrators. It was assumed that critics did influence decisions made by boards of education.[41]

Power and Influence Participants

Proponents of the reputational approach to power structure and influence research declare that their nominees generally are influential. The influence

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[40]Louis E. Holden, "Communications and Decision-Making in School Board-Superintendent Relations: A Case Study," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Oregon, Eugene, 1961.

[41]Bruce I. Vennard, "The Effect that Critics of Educational Practices Have Upon the Thinking of Board of Education Members, Administrators, and Teachers," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, 1964.

of the reputationally identified leaders is seen as "across the board" and not limited to specific areas of community affairs.

Credit for calling attention to the possible specialization of influence by issue areas is given to the political science inspired pluralists. However, it is possible that some advocates of the pluralistic philosophy have exaggerated both the amount of specialization and the extent to which participation in decision-making is widespread in the population.

Pellegrin, among others, has asserted that many investigators dramatically have called attention to the fact that only a small minority of the population is actively and directly involved in decision-making processes. Pellegrin stated specifically that he knew of "no study which has found more than 3 per cent of the adult population actively and directly involved in the decision-making processes of the community."[42]

The literature was surveyed by Robert Presthus on the precise point raised by Pellegrin in regard to general community involvement. According to Presthus, the literature indicated that no more than 1 per cent of the people are involved in decision-making in American cities.

In an effort to verify this finding Presthus also conducted his own study in two New York State communities. He found a total of only eighty individuals in the two cities combined who played active roles in initiating and directing major community decisions. These eighty made up five one thousandths of one per cent of the combined populations of the two cities.[43]

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[42]Roland J. Pellegrin, "Community Power Structure and Educational Decision-Making," paper presented at the National Convention of the American Association of School Administrators, Atlantic City, New Jersey, February, 1965.

[43]Robert Presthus, Men at the Top, New York: Oxford University Press, 1964.

In New Haven Dahl discovered more participation in public affairs by "Economic Notables" than by "Social Notables." Individuals classified as "Economic Notables" frequently held some type of office, but they seemed to avoid political and public education offices.[44] Somewhat similar conclusions were reached in a comparative research project in three Oregon communities.

Pellegrin reported on the Oregon research which he had conducted in conjunction with Keith Goldhammer. For comparative purposes data were gathered by the use of identical procedures in the three communities. The populations ranged from 4,000 in Community A to 12,000 in Community B and 25,000 in Community C. Activity in the areas of economy, government, public education, and public recreation was studied in each community.

Nominations data were utilized, and the researchers also obtained extensive data on the participation of teachers and school administrators in community affairs. Six case histories of decision-making in each community were studied for a total of eighteen detailed case histories. Decisions considered were those related to (1) industrial diversification, (2) downtown development and revitalization, (3) planning programs, (4) facilities and programs in public recreation, (5) the school curriculum, and (6) the expansion and development of educational facilities.

As did the New Haven Study, the Oregon research uncovered significant evidence of specialization of influence by issue areas. The great majority of persons were nominated in but one activity area, while in all three communities the greatest amount of overlapping influence was between economic and government.

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[44] Dahl, Who Governs?, loc. cit.

In support of Dahl's contention it was observed, in the Oregon communities, that very few who played major roles in educational or recreational affairs were influential in the economy or in government. There was some indication, however, that respondents believed there are persons who are influential regardless of the nature of the activity or the issue area.

Findings from the eighteen case histories generally supported the nominations data. Case analysis, in fact, pointed to an even greater specialization by, and even within, issue areas than the nominations data indicated.

Of particular interest was evidence that prestige in a community seems to have a carry-over effect. In several situations the same individuals were named as influential in education and recreation when they had no actual involvement in these activity areas. It should be added that "With few exceptions, school board members are neither very influential nor very active in other community affairs."[45]

In a report of the same Oregon Study Goldhammer offered similar comments concerning specialization of influence according to issue areas. He stated specifically that few, if any, of the citizens who achieve positions of general influence in the community do so as a result of participation in educational affairs. Instead, in Goldhammer's opinion, general influence seems more closely associated with prominence in economic and governmental affairs than in educationally related activities.

Goldhammer also offered the interesting observation that in all three Oregon communities the power holders usually did not commit themselves deeply to educational issues. They did not, therefore, jeopardize their goals and ambitions in other areas of concern by any identification with controversial educational matters.

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[45]Pellegrin Paper, loc. cit.

Goldhammer did suggest that power holders sometimes identify with board members and school administrators in a highly charged emotional atmosphere. Even in such situations, though, these persons of influence were likely to reserve judgment on the issues. They would then appear later to advocate compromises designed to restore stability in educational affairs.[46]

A doctoral candidate examined the direct formal participation of groups of citizens in board of education decisions and attempted to determine what, if any, regular patterns of behavior could be discovered. In this rather ambitious project Smoley considered all issues before the Baltimore, Maryland, Board of School Commissioners during the period 1953-59.

Smoley classified participants in school board issues into four categories according to nature and effect of participation. Theoretically, each of these categories contained groups having a direct functional relationship to the school board. The specified categories were (1) government agencies, (2) elected government officials, (3) school oriented non-government groups, and (4) non-school oriented non-governmental groups.

Government agencies were described as acting in the performance of specific duties to provide services and cooperation to the schools. Smoley saw elected government officials as providing somewhat spurious initiation of issues under pressure of constituents. The role of school oriented non-government groups (excluding professional teacher groups) was described as acting as civic organizations for the schools. The researcher viewed non-school oriented non-government groups as presenting a constant check on board of education activities, objecting and complaining when they felt an injustice had been done, and forcing the board to re-evaluate action taken.

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[46]Goldhammer Paper, "Factors Related to Citizen, Administrator, and Teacher Participation in Educational Decision-Making," loc. cit.

Although he limited his study to formal groups, certain aspects of Smoley's procedures are interesting. For example, each group attempting to influence was classified according to type, access to the decision-making process, nature of participation, and strategy, militancy, and effectiveness. Each board decision was classified as to subject, generality of effect, frequency of occurrence, routineness, and type of school board session at which it was considered. Routine as well as non-routine issues were included.

The researcher felt that his decision to use limited information about a large number of issues and interest groups enhanced opportunities for generalization and consideration of routine as well as non-routine issues. He believed that in-depth investigation and analysis of few issues and participants would have restricted severely the scope of his inquiry.

Smoley's findings tended to reinforce earlier conclusions as to limited participation and low level of community activity with respect to education.

Only 207 of the 2,389 issues showed any participation by groups and individuals outside the formal school government. A large majority of issues were local in effect, frequent in occurrence, routine, and resolved in public sessions of the board.

Smoley, probably correctly, interpreted these findings as indicative of board concern with administrative detail. He also noted the apparent absence of an elite of outside participants. This conclusion was based on the fact that 132 non-governmental groups and 23 government agencies and officials were responsible for the 207 cases of participation.[47]

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[47]Eugene R. Smoley, Jr., "Community Participants in Urban School Government," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 1965.

A Florida researcher utilized a combination of reputational and decision analysis techniques to investigate the behavior of those who influenced decision-making in six school districts. Marsh divided the districts into two groups of three each on the basis of financial effort for education, and a second division was made into large, medium, and small categories on a population basis. Leaders in the districts were classified as political, economic, or specialist according to the source of influence.

Several findings were in substantial agreement with earlier observations and conclusions in other studies of power and influence. These findings included:

1. A predominance in numbers of economic leaders
2. A tendency for political leaders to rank higher than the other two classifications
3. A larger number of negative influentials in high effort districts
4. More leader participation in issues in low effort districts
5. A longer period of leader residence in the low effort districts
6. A greater immigration of leaders in high effort districts
7. Leaders in low effort districts with many more adult relatives.

From this research Marsh concluded that informal organizations were utilized in decision-making, and formal organizations could not be regarded as influential. He concurred with several other writers by suggesting that boards of education were not perceived influential as groups, although a few individual members could be counted as exceptions.[48]

People's perceptions of power and influence participants indeed are important, because it seems that what people think is true is, in effect, if

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[48]William R. Marsh, "Characteristics of the Power Structure of Six Florida School Districts Selected on the Basis of Population, Educational Effort, and Elasticity of Demand for Education," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Florida, Gainesville, 1966.

not in fact, true. This is the basis of a Minnesota study reported by Rose who is very careful to distinguish between "images" of power and "real" or "actual" power.

In his summary description of the power structure of four Minnesota cities Rose pictured a highly diversified, highly specialized, and fractionated power and influence structure. Yet, he was quick to add that the picture emerged "from verbal statements reporting opinions and images, not from observation of actual decision-making or other forms of everyday behavior."[49]

Describing Rose's work, one set of authors said, "He emphasizes also that we live everyday with images of power (which may be true or false) but because we behave in relation to those perceptions, the images themselves are factual and important."[50] Thus, the various perceptions reported in the studies discussed herein should be deemed important.

Local Intergovernmental Relationships

Historically, the public schools have been treated separately from other units of local government even in our large cities. There has been an oft-repeated and long-standing belief that education should be disassociated from politics for such reasons as (1) a desire to avoid political party conflicts, (2) a desire to free schools from the possibility of having their welfare rise or fall with the fortunes or misfortunes of a particular political party, and (3) insistence on a reduction of competition among community political leaders with respect to public education.[51]

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[49]Arnold M. Rose, The Power Structure, New York: Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 354.

[50]Campbell, Cunningham, McPhee, Nystrand, op. cit., p. 429.

[51]Russell T. Gregg, "Political Dimensions of Educational Administration," Teachers College Record, Vol. 67 (November, 1965), pp. 118-119.

Such concerns, and many others, have resulted in the governance of education usually being organized, in form and substance, separately from other units of local government. Indeed, there is a strong tradition of separation with education held apart with its needs judged by criteria differing from those of other units of governance. As summed up by one writer in 1967, "While the geographic space of school district and municipality may coincide or overlap, the two do not occupy the same political space."[52]

As stated earlier, it does seem that at least a few writers now are emphasizing the political aspects of education as opposed to the earlier attempts at maintaining some sort of separation that probably never really existed.

As an example, Havighurst, among others, has succintly pointed out that the component parts of our society have become more interrelated. Government has expanded its scope, and it is being recognized that functions of the school have become tightly intertwined with those of the city. In effect, the city has been forced to expand its services and interests. The schools, for their part, are experiencing more complex demands, too, as they witness a social redefinition of the breadth of the functions of public education.[53]

It should be noted, though, that much work "needs to be done in assessing the perceptions people hold regarding the role of the school and the roles of other community agencies in the total program of education."[54] This statement is particularly appropriate when considering intergovernmental relationships

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[52]David W. Minar, "Community Politics and School Boards," American School Board Journal, Vol. 154 (March, 1967), p. 34.

[53]Robert J. Havighurst (ed.). Metropolitanism: Its Challenge to Education, N.S.S.E. Yearbook, Part I, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968, pp. 202-203.

[54]Roald F. Campbell, Edwin Bridges, John Corbally, Jr., Raphael Nystrand, John Ramseyer, Introduction to Educational Administration, Fourth Edition, Boston, Mass: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971, p. 142.

at the local level. Certainly, there is real need to work out community understandings and programs concerned with the growing interrelatedness of education and the city.

Participation of Mayors

As noted, the topic, "politics of education," has received at least limited attention in the more recent literature. Yet, the relationship of school government and the city's governance has not been fully recognized by either school or municipal officials.

Large city mayors, in particular, sometimes seem reluctant to get directly involved in the problems of public education. The mayor's office in most of our cities already is burdened with a multitude of increasingly difficult problems. Consequently, it is understandable why some mayors are reluctant to be involved in education when such involvement seems tantamount to taking on another set of very serious responsibilities.

Some mayors have been extremely emphatic in public statements to the effect that they have no influence or authority in school matters. It can be assumed that such comments imply that these mayors do not attempt to or do not intend to exert any influence or authority over schools.[55]

Despite natural reluctance, large city mayors cannot escape added responsibilities merely through belief in the myth of separation of politics and education. Schools are ever increasing in comprehensiveness, and there are other factors such as increased lay participation, decentralization, board-administrator-teacher-community conflicts, and new voting blocs in the city. All seem to contribute to the emergence of the mayor as a potentially important

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[55]Robert H. Salisbury, "Schools and Politics in the Big City," Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 37 (Summer, 1967), pp. 421-422.

participant in educational policy formulation. It would appear, therefore, that a mayor, or any political leader, wanting to be reelected must make education a high priority matter.[56]

Writers dealing with roles and functions of mayors usually omit mention of public education. If mentioned at all, the mayor's relationship to education is seen as appointing board of education members in the few cities in which this system of member selection is used. The few community studies that have considered education generally have found the mayor playing no really significant role in educational affairs.[57]

One notable exception is Dahl's study of New Haven, Connecticut. He selected public education as one of three policy areas for research and found that New Haven's mayor played a pivotal role in three cases of educational decision-making.[58]

Richard Saxe surveyed the mayors of America's fifty largest cities and reported varied interests in education. A majority of respondents saw themselves becoming more involved in educational issues. Several, however, courteously explained the tradition of separation of functions and stressed that there was no intent to violate this tradition.[59]

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[56]George R. LaNove, "Henry and Kerwin and Politics and Educational Policy," School Review, Vol. 75 (Spring, 1967), pp. 76-92.

[57]Bernard Mackler and Nancy Bord, "The Role of the Urban Mayor in Education," The Record, Vol. 69 (March, 1968), pp. 531-539.

[58]Dahl, Who Governs?, op. cit., pp. 76-79.

[59]Richard W. Saxe, A Report of a Survey of the Mayors of the Fifty Largest Cities Concerning Their Role in Educational Issues, Toledo, Ohio: Department of Educational Administration and Supervision, College of Education, The University of Toledo, 1969.

By way of example, one respondent stated that:

> We are, of course, always concerned and in constant consultation with the School Board and the School's Superintendent concerning activities that overlap between our two areas of responsibility. I do not intend, however, to become involved in school issues such as curricula, bussing of students, and matters of that type, since this is clearly the responsibility of another agency, who I am sure would not appreciate my injection into their affairs any more than I would appreciate theirs into mine.[60]

And, along the same line, another mayor said:

> My frank answer is that education and politics do not mix. . . on hiring policy, or on the general conduct of the elected Board handling of school matters, politicians should leave education alone and allow the elected Board of Education to do its job.[61]

As previously stated, the trend noted by Saxe seemed to be more and more involvement of mayors in educational matters. Perhaps most representative of this trend were comments offered by the mayor of one of our largest cities:

1. Efforts are being made to establish a more effective system of relationships between the Board of Education and other city agencies, in the past, such problems as over-lapping jurisdictions have tended to preclude full responsibility by any one agency.

2. Plans are being made to utilize full resources of the city to promote and make a success of decentralization; top priority is being given to this effort.

3. October of last year, the Mayor's Office of Education Liasion was established to advise me on matters involving educational planning and policy decisions.[62]

According to Saxe's findings, there is a need and at least some desire for mayors to become more involved in education. At the same time, one can note the continuing influence of tradition which hampers efforts of politicians who seek to influence education.

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[60] Ibid., p. 14.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid., p. 15.

Saxe concluded his report by saying:

> It seems to this writer that, at least in the giant cities, it is academic to debate closer educational-political cooperation. Like it or not the events of the day will not permit a fragmented approach to education in the city. Our concern would better be to define and test new relationships and create channels of communication. Hopefully this can be done without repeating mistakes of the past and will result in an improved educational operation without a loss in importance of either educators or politicians.[63]

One researcher focused directly on the question of whether a specific large-city mayor was influential in decision-making with regard to controversial educational issues. A very large industrial city provided the locus for this case study.

A panel of school system "knowledgeables," comprised of the superintendent and the immediate past and current presidents of the Board of Education, nominated the most controversial educational issues confronting the school system during a specific time period. The nominated issues were verified through the use of content analysis techniques, and four issues finally were selected for detailed scrutiny.

Data were gathered through personal interviews, questionnaires, news accounts, and Board of Education minutes. Each issue was reconstructed and then analyzed in an effort to determine the relative influence of the mayor.

In terms of the four controversial issues, the mayor was found to be significantly involved in Issue One and Issue Four, deliberately less significantly involved in Issue Three, and not involved in Issue Two. Based upon the findings of this study and applying only to the target city, it was concluded that:

1. There is a relationship between politics and education, and the relationship between municipal government and the schools is extensive.

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[63] Ibid., p. 16.

2. The relationship of this large-city mayor to educational decision-making was extensive.

3. This large-city mayor was an influential actor with regard to controversial educational issue resolution.

4. The nature of the mayor's involvement in controversial educational issues, although significant, was largely the result of requests for assistance.

5. No coalitions of action existed between participants and/or organizations of one sector (i.e., municipal government, school government, and community) and participants and/or organizations of another sector.

6. In this specific city a power elite apparently did not exist with regard to controversial issue resolution.[64]

Educators As Influentials

It has been common in the literature to emphasize the importance of educational administrators as influentials in school affairs. There has been evidence to indicate, however, that educators' influence, or potential influence, in school matters does not carry over into the general community. For instance, findings in "Valley City" clearly demonstrated that educators were lowest in levels of influence and in status when compared to leaders in other fields of the community.[65]

Goldhammer expressed a similar point of view. He acknowledged that the school administrator could be highly influential within the educational arena. Yet, according to Goldhammer, this same administrator is relatively lacking in influence outside the field of education. In studies he is rarely mentioned by respondents as having influence in general community affairs. It seems

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[64]Daniel L. Apling, "An Analysis of a Large-City Mayor's Influence With Regard to Educational Decision-Making," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, The University of Toledo, 1970.

[65]A.A.S.A., 37th Yearbook, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

that the administrator "is considered a specialist who can speak with authority within the realm of his profession but is not called upon to do so in other areas of concern."[66]

In his previously-cited doctoral research, Marsh found that superintendents in five of six Florida school districts were not attributed high influence rankings. He observed that in the sixth district the administrator had been in his position more than twenty years.[67]

Again according to Goldhammer, part of this ineffectiveness stems from the fact that the school administrator tends to identify himself with a comparatively narrow segment of the community. The superintendent and other top administrators join civic luncheon clubs, the Chamber of Commerce, and the leading lodges or churches and thus are identified primarily with the managerial and propietary interests.[68]

A Florida team studied the importance of community power structure in the establishment of educational policy. The research was centered in two local (countywide) school districts with similar social climate indexes but wide differences in local financial effort for education.

Findings showed that power in Beech County (the low-effort district) seemed concentrated in the hands of economic dominants. However, in River County (the high-effort district) power was not confined to economic domination because retirees, professionals, and public officials were all represented in

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[66]Goldhammer Paper, loc. cit.

[67]Marsh, "Characteristics of the Power Structure of Six Florida School Districts Selected on the Basis of Population, Educational Effort, and Elasticity of Demand for Education," loc. cit.

[68]Goldhammer Paper, loc. cit.

the upper limits of power. Of greatest significance was the fact that the superintendent of the River County School District was identified among the nine most powerful individuals in the county's power structure.

Apparently, the power structure in River County had been monopolistic until about 1954. As postulated by Kimbrough, rapid population growth then resulted in the emergence of new power groups, a two-party system, and the splintering of the once monolithic power pyramid into several factions. Thus, a redistribution of power seemingly had been accomplished in the county to the extent that seven different power groups were identified by the Florida research team.

Kimbrough hastened to point out that the seven power groups were not fragmented in the way that pluralists viewed fragmentation. Important interaction ties were evident among the top influentials of different groups, and overlapping memberships among the groups were common. This apparently resluted in considerable fluidity of leader movement with top influentials tending to be active in several different issue areas. Usually, an air of competition prevailed between the various power groups, but researchers noted much cooperation between leaders, particularly on important projects.

The exercise of power and influence in decision-making in River County was largely informal. Probably, this informality allowed the superintendent of schools to wield considerable power, because he operated effectively in the informal interaction areas between the various influentials from the several power groups.[69]

Bailey and associates expressed interest in the school administrator's understanding of and participation in the community's power and influence structure.

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[69]Ralph B. Kimbraugh, Informal County Leadership Structure and Controls Affecting Educational Policy Decision-Making, Cooperative Research Project No. 1,324, Gainesville, Florida: College of Education, University of Florida, 1964, pp. 1-2, 6-12, 132-133.

From a review of political activities in eight northeastern states it was concluded that school administrators' power activities usually were characterized by disorder and naivete. The writers observed that educational admininstrators' understandings of power relationships ranged from very little comprehension in most instances to a few instances in which superintendents were important policy leaders in the total community power structure.[70]

The classroom teacher's role in community power structure and influence patterns also has received some attention. Goldhammer, for one, described teachers in local community affairs as non-power aspirants who do not seek positions of influence or prestige. He acknowledged that teachers do have some potential for community influence but usually do not live up to this potential.

In Goldhammer's opinion, the desire for involvement on the part of teachers normally is limited to decisions affecting their direct benefits and immediate classroom management problems. Teachers exhibit low motivation for participation in other educational or community decisions, according to this point of view.[71]

Additional Methodological Considerations and Findings

Most of the limited number of educationally related studies of community leadership, policy formation, and influence patterns in public school issues have used the reputational approach or modification of this basic methodology.

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[70]Stephen K. Bailey, Richard Frost, Paul Marsh and Robert Wood, Schoolmen in Politics, Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1962.

[71]Goldhammer Paper, loc. cit.

Even researchers who have focused on specific school issues for analytical purposes often have utilized panel nomination techniques similar to those employed by the reputationalists.

Some authors have recommended that a combination of methods be used for power studies in education. Blome, in particular, suggested that reputational, positional, and specific issue approaches be combined for true objectivity.[72]

Several other writers have advocated a method for identifying power actors in educational situations based primarily on reputational and power attribution techniques. These writers admit to advantages in combining methods but have been somewhat critical of the study of actual events and decisions. They charge that this method is time consuming and weak, because it assumes that the so-called power actors visibly do something. Power actors, according to this methodological orientation, may or may not take "visible actions."[73]

Campbell advocated the use of reputational philosophy in the identification of influential individuals in school situations. He reviewed research findings concerning the multiple variables influencing administrative behavior. He then called attention to the need to research community value patterns, power structure considerations, and the effect of both covert and overt actions upon administrative behavior.[74]

The same writer clearly expressed the reputationalist point of view in discussing influences on educational administrative behavior. He commented

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[72]Blome Dissertation, loc. cit.

[73]Subcommittee on Leadership of the North Central Rural Sociology Committee, op. cit., pp. 8-10.

[74]Roald F. Campbell, "Situational Factors in Educational Administration," in Roald F. Campbell and Russell Gregg (eds.), Administrative Behavior in Administration, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957.

that "Community control is exercised by a handful of influential people who seem, for the most part, to be willingly accorded their positions of influence by their fellow citizens."[75]

Webb was another researcher who applied reputational techniques to power structure study in educational administration.[76] Barnes' study also supported use of a panel of knowledgeables in nominating influentials in local school matters.[77]

One doctoral student dealt specifically with methods employed by school administrators in locating influentials. Vannan's stated purpose was to discover methods of identifying leaders in community power structures utilized and found effective by chief school administrators in Pennsylvania. He devised a checklist containing a list of methods used for community leader identification. One hundred forty-one useable checklists were received from randomly selected superintendents and supervising principals, and responses were rank ordered as follows according to frequency of selection:

1. Participating in the program and activities of local service clubs
2. Participating in local activities and events
3. Consulting the former administrator of the school district
4. Participating in groups offering opportunities for opinion leadership
5. Consulting the local school board
6. Consulting individuals who have a relatively long period of residence in the community

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[75]Ibid., p. 244.

[76]Harold V. Webb, Community Power Structure Related to School Administration, Laramie, Wyoming: University of Wyoming, 1956.

[77]William D. Barnes, "A Study of Informal Group Activity Within a Community's Educational Arena," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Oregon, Eugene, 1961.

7. Identifying officials of local banking establishments
8. Studying local newspapers and other local publications
9. Identifying leaders of local fund-raising drives
10. Consulting members of the clergy.[78]

Thus, even in the actual methods used for the identification of influentials by some school administrators in the field, reputational-elitist considerations seemed to be important.

The broad case study-issue analysis technique sometimes is used as an investigative tool in the analysis of school problem situations. An example is an Oregon case study in which it was found that competing influence groups were bringing conflict to the county-unit school district.

Apparently, there was much division among the people of the "community" in their aspirations and orientations. Residents seemed divided into two groups, termed "cosmopolitans" and "locals" by the researchers. The cosmopolitans were relatively new to the area and were described as people with broad experience in governmental, industrial, academic, or other professional affairs. They were accustomed to spending a significant portion of their incomes on cultural and educational advantages for their families.

Cosmopolitans were contrasted to the more conservative locals who preferred things as they had been in previous times. The cosmopolitans were further described as people to whom savings were not too important, since they were covered by retirement provisions and other benefits contributing to a feeling of some security.

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[78]Donald A. Vannan, "Methods of Identifying Community Power Structures Utilized by Chief School Administrators in Selected School Districts of Pennsylvania," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, 1962.

According to the researchers, cosmopolitans had come from sections of the country in which they had participated in local government. As a result, they were somewhat sophisticated in political attitudes and skills. They tended to be at least slightly liberal in attitudes at least with respect to various community services (social and educational) congruent with the levels of aspiration they held for their children.

The investigators reported there were major controversies on many critical issues during the one-year period of study with each issue illustrating the same fundamental problem. In substance, there were two factions with diverse commitments, and each faction was looking to the future and striving to build further support for its position.

There were interesting findings regarding the participation of women influentials in the community power structure. Although the evidence was not entirely consistent, indications were that women played a more pronounced leadership role than that customarily found in urban areas. This was particularly true among the "cosmopolitan set," because most of the men spent their waking hours at work outside the community.

It was noted, also, that the most important organizations representing the locals were dominated by men and could be characterized as conservative economic interest groups.[79]

Another case study, an investigation of conflict in the school situation in Levittown, New York, illustrated the problems of creating community traditions and accepted leadership in a new, rapid growth, mass-produced community.

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[79]Keith Goldhammer and Frank Farner, The Jackson County Story, A Case Study. Eugene, Oregon: The Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration, University of Oregon, 1965, pp. 7-9, 51.

The most critical problem seen in Levittown was the need to find leadership behind which the entire community could unite. The investigating committee duly noted that all organizations in Levittown were concerned with the schools, but there were no common areas of agreement as to what constitutes a good school system.

According to the investigators, there were many persons prominent in individual organizations, but there was no nucleus of persons to whom the community might turn with confidence for leadership in seeking a common ground of understanding on school matters.

The report further underscored the effects of lack of established power and influence patterns. Levittown's organizational structure was described as consisting of many diffuse, small, and barely interlocking voluntary groupings with very little coordination. Consequently, the cleavage of the community into two competing interest group blocs which dominated the field and which were led by small segments of the population was deemed as not at all surprising.

The investigators also pointed out that leadership which had developed in Levittown was made up primarily of self-appointed leaders whose appeal was based on personal beliefs concerning a particular issue attracting interest in the community. It was obvious that such leadership was limited in that few leaders exerted influence for any appreciable length of time.[80]

Major Power Typologies

As previously noted, two contradictory points of view have predominated in the study of community power and influence patterns.

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[80]National Commission of Professional Rights and Responsibilities, Levittown, New York, A Study of Leadership Problems in a Rapidly Developed Community, Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1962, pp. 5, 33.

The sociology-based reputational point of view is that power and influence are generalized. This philosophy holds that a monolithic power pyramid is dominant with only a few individuals being generally powerful in most major community activities.

Sociological literature, beginning with the work of Floyd Hunter,[81] is replete with references to this type of power structure sometimes described as the elite power model. The basic idea is that the community' power structure is pyramidal in shape with only an elite few influentials to be found at the top. As seen by the sociologists, this decisive decision-making group usually is made up of the economic dominants of the specific community.

Political scientists have adopted a more pluralistic stance in theorizing that power and influence are not static commodities. These pluralists, with Robert Dahl as a major spokesman,[82] believe that power and influence patterns often change from issue to issue because people attempt to get involved primarily in areas of major interest to each individual.

Differences in the two perspectives of community are at least partially caused by the divergent orientations of sociology and political science.

Sociologists emphasize the over-all social structure and regard community politics as a subsidiary aspect of this structure. The various implications of social stratification frequently are of considerable interest to sociologists as they study social-environmental effects.

Political scientists devote more attention to institutional factors and stress investigation of interest groups and leadership roles rather than

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[81]Hunter, Community Power Structure, loc. cit.

[82]Dahl, Who Governs, loc. cit.

hierarchy. Political scientists, as pluralists, are much more eclectic in their approaches to community power research than are the sociologists-reputationalists.

This point was well illustrated by Jennings who, in an attempt to refute earlier power elite findings, observed that power structure inquiries could benefit from a variety of approaches, conceptual schemes, and research strategies.[83] The various techniques utilized by the pluralists, in fact, have been described as somewhat comparable to those of the journalist, the sociologist, the historian, and the anthropologist.[84]

An obvious weakness of the so-called power elite model is that it does not allow for conflict between two or more sides of relatively even strength. So, the pluralists have developed concepts almost dichotomous to the elitist philosophy at the risk of implying too much diffusion in the community.

In reality, the situation in most communities in which school administrators work probably is somewhere between the rather polarized positions of sociologists and political scientists. Perhaps, then, the possibility of the existence of several types of power systems needs to be considered.

Scholars slowly are recognizing the possibility of the existence of different types of community power and influence structures. Such recognition seems particularly appropo. to actual situations in which schools are finding themselves.

A few research studies have verified the existence of various typologies of power and influence systems at the community level. This research demon-

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[83]M. Kent Jennings, Community Influentials: The Elites of Atlanta, New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1964, p. 205.

[84]Polsby, Community Power and Political Theory, op. cit., pp. 69-70.

strates further that communities sometimes may be characterized as in transition from one type of structure to another. Thus, it is possible that the true situation in many school communities is not understood by an exclusive allegiance to either an elistist or a pluralist position.

Other Typologies

Ralph Kimbrough and other University of Florida researchers have been major contributors to the emergent idea that community power structures may include more types than the two commonly described. As a result of extensive field study these researchers have set forth four main types of structures and have suggested that there may be numerous variations within each type. The four main types will be discussed briefly in the following paragraphs.

Type I--Monopolistic Power Structure--The monopolistic power system, according to Kimbrough, refers to several forms of monolithic elite systems. It reflects the Hunter or reputational-elitist point of view but does suggest that the power elite's control might not be quite as absolute as that usually described by the reputationalists.

The monopolistic structure exists "where a group of influentials whose interactions are based on more than chance exercise a dominant, not absolutely complete, influence over public policy."[85] Apparently, this type may be formal, informal or both and could be tied in with several different satellite systems, a point clearly recognized by the earlier reputational-elitists.

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[85]Ralph B. Kimbrough, Administering Elementary Schools, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968, p. 73.

Kimbrough and the other Florida researchers have suggested that the power elite in this type of system seldom rules without opposition. The opposition, however, may be very sporadic according to specific issues and could stem from latent sources of political power in the system. It seems that opposition by the same group or groups rarely would be of much duration, and general civic participation in policy making would be relatively ineffective.

Type II--Multigroup Non-competitive structure--The multigroup non-competitive system, as described from the Florida research, could be found in some rural area school districts containing several small villages or towns. If each of these villages or towns has a discernible power structure usually "The influentials of these different structures do not interact as a singular group in 'running' the school district."[86]

In such a system any political action would involve co-opting the support of influentials of the various communities of the school district.

Interestingly, Kimbrough noted that in school districts of this type there is general consensus among influentials and other leaders about the nature and basic values of community living. He cited one district studied in which there was general consensus among leaders in favor of conservative civic beliefs. Kimbrough's thought was that this situation is representative of the closed system in which public policy "has a high degree of equilibrium."[87]

Type III--Competitive Elite Structure--This system could be characterized by "regime conflicts." Power struggles may occur between groups and coalitions

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[86] Ibid.

[87] Ibid.

of influentials, and a high percentage of community leaders may participate in decisions of various issue areas. For instance, influential decision makers in planning and zoning matters could be the same as those involved in other areas such as education, health, and economics.

Although perhaps less so than the first two types the competitive structure is an elite system because it implies that very few citizens are effectively involved in decisions. It is fraught with danger for educational administrators due to the possibility that schools may be "caught in the middle" between two or more warring factions of community influentials.

Type IV--Pluralistic Power Structures--As the title implies, the pluralistic system directly reflects the political science inspired pluralistic school of thought. As reported from the Florida studies several fragmented power groups are involved in decisions with the influentials of these groups tending to be specialized with respect to participation in decisions. That is to say that few influentials providing leadership in the field of education are deeply involved in other political activities such as urban renewal, public health, and street improvements.

The Florida perspective of pluralism recognizes the group referrent so vital to school administrators today. In other words, many organized groups are developing into effective centers of power in public policy. Through membership in organized interest groups more citizens are effectively involved in decisions of the various political units including the school district. To Kimbrough this type of pluralism "is more consistent with democratic ideals than the other typologies discussed previously."[88]

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[88] Ibid., p. 74.

It should be repeated that the four typologies are extremely general, and there are vast differences between the power structures within a typology. As an example, monopolistic power structures for different school districts will differ. They may vary according to whether the perceived influentials are politicians, businessmen, professionals, or a mixture. The structures vary as to how many people are involved with the result that no two systems could exhibit identical characteristics.

As summarized by Kimbrough, "The power systems of school districts, like the features of different men, vary enough in some respects to make each a unique living system."[89]

Walton, after reviewing a number of research studies in the community power field, identified four typologies similar to those developed from the Florida studies. He concluded that the four most common types were:

1. Pyramidal--a monolithic, monopolistic, or single cohesive leadership group

2. Factional--at least two durable factions that compete for advantage

3. Coalitional--leadership varies with issues and is made up of interested persons and groups

4. Amorphous--the absence of any persistent pattern of leadership or power exercised on the local level.[90]

Similar descriptions of local power typologies are presented by McCarty and Ramsey in a forthcoming book.

These authors describe the elite power model and then note that there are some communities in which at least two durable factions compete for control

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[89] Ibid.

[90] John Walton, "Discipline, Method and Community Power: A Note on the Sociology of Knowledge," American Sociological Review, Vol. 3 (October, 1966), pp. 684-689.

over important decisions. It seems that in such situations are found not only relatively even sides but also clear manifestations of power within each faction similar to those in the single elite power model. There is a tendency for these factions to coalesce around natural rallying points in the community. Examples of rallying points include religion, politics, occupation, and economic philosophy.

As stated by McCarty and Ramsey, some communities follow neither the elite nor the factional power model. In such situations power and influence are pluralistic or diffused with many poles of power. Leadership tends to vary with issues. Power and community interests exist, but power is contestable and not particularly overwhelming.

The fourth type of power structure discussed in the forthcoming book can be found in some small rural communities. This would be the residual type community revealing no active power structure. In such a community power is basically inert or latent and resembles what might be described as domination by the status quo.[91]

Applied Techniques

Although taking strictly an elitist view, Gregg has made a good case for the necessity of a school administrator being knowledgeable about his community's power structure.

According to Gregg, the educational administrator must be aware that there are influentials in the school district, make an effort to learn who

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[91]Donald J. McCarty and Charles Ramsey, The School Managers: Power and Conflict in American Public Education, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Corporation, forthcoming (a comparative account of the effects of community power structure on boards of education and administrators in 51 different communities).

they are, what motivates them, what resources are available to them, and what the patterns of interaction are among the various influentials. The administrator must develop knowledge of the personalities, organizations, and other power agents operating in the school district, particularly those with specific interests in educational policy.

Gregg also has made the point, again from an elitist perspective, that the school administrator must not only know about the power structure but must be able to make effective use of it in developing an environment in which the schools enjoy favorable attitudes and an adequate level of financial support. This means that the administrator must develop effective interaction patterns with all types of influentials.

Through these interactions, then, the administrator can win the confidence and support of influential citizens to the extent that they will be supportive of educational policy proposals. Also, it might be possible for the educational administrator to identify opponents and make attempts to neutralize them.[92]

As previously noted, there have been relatively few specific applications of power structure methodology to the field of educational administration. The few formal studies that have been completed have been primarily doctoral dissertations, and reputational methodology has been the overwhelming choice as the basic research approach in such studies.

The writer, in line with current pluralistic trends in the society in which our schools exist, would tend to favor the pluralistic philosophy and the issue analysis techniques in actual application to educational administration.

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[92]Walter G. Hack, William Gephart, James Heck, and John Ramseyer (Eds.). Educational Administration. Second Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971, p. 222.

The earlier statement that reputational methods predominate leads naturally to the conclusion that power and influence studies in educational administration have been inadequate. The sheer numerical lack of studies in school administration, except as related to doctoral research, also lends support to this conclusion.

It would appear that for the formal researcher, with an orientation toward the reputational, a combination of reputational and pluralistic—issue analysis techniques should at least be considered. Recognition should be given to the fact, however, that today's practicing school administrator in an emergent "Age of Accountability" indeed is a busy man and does not have the time for formal research related to his community's power structure and influence patterns. Thus, suggestions are needed for practical techniques to be utilized by the modern school administrator who is faced with such inordinate time demands in attempting to carry out the basic functions of his position. Such suggestions will be offered in the final section of this report.

Practical Recommendations For School Administrators

School officials frequently utilize many of the techniques customarily associated with the reputational approach to community power study. This fact was clearly pointed out by the earlier-cited doctoral research conducted by Donald Vannan in Pennsylvania.[93] Almost all of the techniques utilized by the sample of Pennsylvania administrators could be classified as reputationally oriented.

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[93]Vannan, "Methods of Identifying Community Power Structures Utilized by Chief School Administrators in Selected School Districts of Pennsylvania," loc. cit.

It can be suggested, though, that educational decision-makers in actual practice also frequently utilize many techniques of the issue analyst.

The difference is that the application of such analytical tools often is automatic and does not result from a really conscious and considered selection of method. For example, the possible consequences of available alternatives are key variables in a board of education's decision-making processes.

Frequently, the tendency is to look at past issues and to think in terms of past decisions and their consequences. Issues bearing some similarity to the current problem then become relevant variables while the remainder of the universe of past issues can be relegated to the exogenous category. As part of the discussion of the current points in question the past issues are subjected to informal analysis in the hope that such analysis will have predictive value.

This technique, when combined with other considerations, can lead to high-quality decisions if most of the truly relevant variables are included in the deliberations. It is equally possible, though, that an informal analytical approach of this type could adversely affect decision quality.

Although school boards' and administrators' consideration of past issues largely is informal, standard criticisms of issue analysis as applied to formal research are appropriate. Board members and administrators may be guilty of making invalid generalizations of findings.

If past issues are to be used in an effort to predict future outcomes, these issues must have many of the most pertinent characteristics in common with the current problem. Proper selection of past issues thus becomes most crucial, because it is questionable whether sufficient commonalities between past and current situations can be found in a period of rapid change in which

schools presently find themselves. Consequently, generalization of findings and conclusions from past events and concomitant outcomes to current issues could be dangerous.

It is possible, too, that stagnant and overly-conservative decisions will result due to the fact that the most relevant changes in conditions and circumstances over time are not really considered.

It can only be suggested that boards and administrators be constantly on the alert to the potential hazards in generalizing past issues and outcomes to the present and to the future. The myriad of possible changes in today's and tomorrow's societies must constantly be in the minds of these decision-makers who must consider the acute needs of many groups.

The school administrator, individually, also uses issue analysis even though he is not engaged in formal community research efforts, as such. He may utilize this analytical tool in a manner similar to his efforts with the board of education or he could employ issue analysis as a means of looking at the broader spectrum, the total community setting in which the school system operates.

Issue analysis, conducted in a relatively informal manner, can serve as an extremely useful tool for the educational administrator.

Certainly, it would be advantageous for the school administrator occasionally to adopt an historical perspective in order to look at past school and community issues. Such considerations could have some predictive value, subject to the real limitations mentioned previously, and could contribute to higher level administrator understanding of community. Again, the practicing administrator is a busy person, so his analysis of past issues, of necessity, must be brief and uncomplicated.

Possibly, educational administrators do engage in issue analysis to a greater extent than usually is recognized. Such analysis, in fact, is an integral part of the administrative decision-making process, even though the administrator has little, if any, involvement in formal study of power and influence at the community level.

The personal perspective of the decision-maker, of course, is very important. Past experiences and valid recognition and knowledge of relevant past issues, decisions, events, and consequences thus make up a portion of the decision-maker's apperspective background which, in turn, will have direct effect upon the ultimate decision.

School administrators could profitably, and without more than the usual stresses and strains of administrative life, extend their applications of issue analysis techniques. The precedure need not be difficult or complex and might consist of little more than taking advantage of "normal" day to day job-related activities.

Researchers utilizing issue analysis as the principal method for the formal study of power and influence seem to employ four basic approaches to data gathering. Participants in and observers of each issue area are interviewed, newspapers are consulted, public documents are scrutinized, and long-term personal observations by the researchers themselves are used whenever possible.

Vannan's rank-ordered list of methods used by selected chief school officers to identify community influentials, although definitely reputationally-oriented, does have possibilities for conversion to issue analysis methodology.[94]

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[94]Vannan, loc. cit.

The most frequently mentioned technique was participation in the programs and activities of local service clubs while consulting the local school board also ranked in the top ten according to frequency of mention. Contacts made through local service activities could assist in the identification of at least reputed influentials and possible issue participants.

Interaction with these many individuals could afford opportunities for "interviews," a tool of the issue analyst. Although these "interviews" will be little more than informal discussions, a perceptive administrator will accumulate considerable information about past issues and understandings and interpretations of present problems and situations. Consultations with the board of education at the local level could produce much the same results.

If service clubs, school boards, etc. are to serve identification and "interview" purposes, the administrator obviously must proceed with great care. He first must be certain he is concerning himself with important and truly relevant issues. Therefore, the usual selection problems are present.

The administrator must realize the necessity for pertinent and valid data and must thoroughly evaluate the so-called facts. He must develop the ability to recognize biases, prejudices, self-interests, ego involvements, memory lapses, grossly erroneous impressions and interpretations, incompleteness of data, inconsistencies, etc. And, the administrator always must be acutely aware that he is communicating with only a narrow, possibly unrepresentative, perhaps reputationally-identified, segment of the school community's total population.

Worthy of reemphasis in this context is the warning about the administrator's absolute public identification with any particular group. Goldhammer's comments concerning this particular problem as related to the school administrator are well taken:

> His effectiveness. . . appears to be reduced by the fact that he tends to identify himself with a comparatively narrow segment of the community. He joins civic luncheon clubs, the Chamber of Commerce and the more respectable lodges or churches within the community. He is, thus, identified with the managerial and proprietary perspective and develops the appearance of being closely associated with people involved in influential positions in business and governmental affairs.[95]

The many possible harmful effects of an administrator's public image of the type described are obvious. The educational program, the community in general, and the administrator personally may suffer the consequences. To the community power and influence scholar there is an additional problem.

If the administrator limits his primary associations to the assumed or attributed influentials he may be making the a priori assumption as to power and influence for which pluralistic researchers have rather severely chastized the reputational advocates. If, in terms of the four basic approaches to issue analysis, the school administrator uses his associations with the reputed "influentials" as the sole method for identifying and "interviewing" issue participants, he indeed has assumed that a specific power elite does exist.

Such an assumed power configuration may or may not exist and, at the very least, may not be truly representative of the local political process. In short, it could provide the administrator with a very distorted picture of the pertinent aspects of the community's power and influence patterns.

Obviously, an administrator's almost total identification and association with a reputed elite, to the virtual exclusion of other patrons of the school district, would be professionally unsound and even could be termed unethical. This practice would tend to lend credence to some of the findings of stratificationists and earlier educational researchers who studied effects of the social

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[95]Goldhammer Paper, "Factors Related to Citizen, Administrator and Teacher Decision-Making," loc, cit.

composition of decision-making groups in education. Emphatically, the school administrator also would run the risk of not getting a clear picture of his own community.

Newspaper reading, scrutiny of public documents, and long-term personal observations are the other more commonly utilized techniques for data gathering in the study of specific issues. All three are most readily available to the educational administrator.

The extreme importance of thorough consideration and detailed analysis of news and editorial reports from various media requires little additional emphasis. It is equally apparent that the administrator should familiarize himself with the philosophies, editorial policies, and extent and potential power of the local news media.

Board of education minutes, correspondence, and related materials are extremely important as are various other public documents. Close study of the available documents and materials should be almost routine procedure for the administrator and his staff. Past documents and materials of this nature are key resources in the use of the suggested historical perspective for analysis of past issues, decisions, and outcomes in terms of possible relationships to current and future situations.

Long-term personal observation of a community is a tool much more readily available to the school administrator than to the power structure researcher. The administrator is a resident of and participant in the community while the formal researcher's stay normally is of much shorter duration. The administrator, in effect, frequently views events "from the inside," an opportunity much more rarely afforded the researcher who is seen more as something esoteric from some university or other.

Long tenure in a given community and in a particular administrative post

has been cited as one of the keys to knowledge of a community's power structure and influence patterns.[96]

Longevity also can be deemed important to the administrator's use of informal issue analysis. The administrator "enjoying" incumbency of some duration in the position has a golden opportunity for long-term observation, but he must be certain that his perceptions have been sharpened to a point where his observations are valid. He could be prone to unfounded generalization and tendencies to attempt to merely maintain the elusive status quo.

The school administrator new to the community also should recognize the potential inherent in the issue analysis approach.

It can be assumed that most "new" administrators do employ issue analysis techniques, to varying degrees. However, it is suggested that these administrators should become increasingly aware of the advantages of careful consideration of issues and the easy availability and application of various informal analytical techniques. Contacts, discussions, review of pertinent media reports of past events, careful study of "old" minutes, documents, correspondence, bulletins, etc., and "keen" personal observations are excellent ways to become acquainted with a community and its power and influence patterns and relationships.

The tools are available, and school administrators can develop understandings of their constituencies even in these times of rapid and drastic changes. In an "Age of Accountability" such understandings are essential for sheer survival of American education and educators. Schools indeed are in politics, and educators must develop an understanding of politics and the political process, particularly at the local level.

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[96] Marsh Dissertation, loc. cit. and Kimbrough, Informal County Leadership Structure and Controls Affecting Educational Policy Decision-Making, op. cit., pp. 132-133.

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